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West Chester University

Higher Education Policy and Student Affairs

THESIS



The Duality of the Black Student Activist:
A Decolonial Approach to Reframing Student Activism as
Student Leadership

Kaileik J. Asbury

May 2020

The Duality of the black student activist:
A Decolonial Approach to Reframing Student Activism as Student Leadership

A Thesis

Presented to the Faculty of the
Department of Educational Foundations and Policy Studies
West Chester University
West Chester, Pennsylvania

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
the Degree of
Master of Science

By
Kaileik J. Asbury
May 2020

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Dedication

This is in dedication to William Rodriguez. You have provided me with the love, support, protection and motivation for twenty-four years. You have guided me to accomplish my goals with strength, fire and passion. I will honor your name and your soul in all I do.

Grandpa

A passionate fighter, teacher, and leader

1/12/51-2/10/2020

Let your ancestors guide you.

Honor and cherish what they have instilled into you.

Let that drive you and accomplish more than they could have ever imagined.

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Lastly, to all the Black college students keep going, keep learning, keep achieving. You have a purpose and let that drive you to do whatever you are destined to accomplish.

Abstract

This thesis addresses how reframing activism as leadership allows student activist to be viewed as student leaders on college campuses. More specifically, I explore how the Black student existence and experience on college campus and their desire for an equitable education has always been considered a form of activism that had continuously been suppressed. I used the methodology of critical action research to examine the structures of Eurocentricity, colonization, racialization and domination that affect the educational experiences of Black student activists, while also utilizing my personal experience. I propose a leadership building program that promotes racial justice, decolonial methods and activism. The program will provide a cohort of students with the necessary support and education with a decolonial framework from faculty and student affairs professionals to ensure they feel supported and empowered on their campus. This is a vital and critical matter to consider because it addresses the issues of the Black student experience, social justice and activism and the acknowledgement of the current issues in student leadership training for Black students. Black activist are leaders and should be seen as such on college campuses, they should be provided the same support and development and not seen as rebels or trouble makers, but as student leaders striving to create institutional change.

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Chapter 1

Introduction and Positionality

Rewinding back to my eighth-grade graduation it felt like nothing could be more important and nothing mattered more, I was graduating. I was going to an early college preparatory high school, so I truly was not thinking of college. I was ready to make friends, be able to leave the building for lunch, take the train to school, meet high school boys, join a sports team and just have the typical New York high school experience. As I entered high school my sister who was four years older was preparing for college. At the time, I thought college was one giant sleepover everyday where you were be alone with your friends and live on campus like in the movies. I was beyond jealous, but so excited for her at the same time. When my sister was going to college I felt like I was too. It began my journey to try and be everything I could so I could leave the Bronx and experience what she did. Two years later my older brother did the same, it was normal for us to embark on this journey and even expected from our parents. This time as he left for his journey tears poured down my face, I can admit now it was not just because I would miss him, but again I had that same jealousy in the pit of my stomach.

I take immense pride in the value of education my mother has instilled in my brother and myself. At the age of 23, my single mother had two children and knew she wanted better for us than the life she was given. Different from my father who lived a life of a gang affiliation, drugs and violence in the South Bronx. My mother received her bachelor's degree in her early 30's, while taking care of her children and her parents. I had seen both a traditional student experience and a non-traditional before I embarked on my own journey. I knew my life was not set to go to

a city university in New York or even one of our state universities, I wanted to branch out and see a different life, meet new people and be as independent as my parents would let me.

I attended Chestnut Hill College in the Germantown area of Philadelphia. It was a complete change from the Bronx, it was suburban, quiet, sweet, and different. A private four-year catholic institution opened by The Sisters of Saint Joseph. They advertised the school like Temple University, right in the heart of the city, easy transportation and super liberal; I could beg to differ. The school was on the outskirts of the city with only one regional rail train to our area, and this was where I had my first experience realizing I was nothing else to people but Black. I was depressed, my relationship ended, I missed the normalcy of home, and I was so confused on who I was. I constantly called my mom and grandparents to feel better, but honestly nothing helped my growing depression. I was not engaged in anything else except the classroom, my entire educational experience was amazing up to this point. Yet this was supposed to be the most remarkable moments and memories of my life. The following summer in 2014 I decided to make an effort and put energy into what at the time would completely change my life, I decided to make the change within myself.

My in-class experience did teach me great study skills, public speaking, and preparation for a career in sales and marketing. In retrospect, I was in a major I knew I did not want to be in and was not passionate about. I had incredible advisers and faculty who motivated me and developed my abilities to work in the business world. Fast forward to my last semester I was able to take an introductory sociology course, gender and race in media, marginalization and social identity and a reconciliation and forgiveness class. Prior to this, I slowly found myself interested in racial identity and social justice beginning in my sophomore year, but did nothing about it. That fire was ignited in me when I noticed I was the only person of color in numerous classes of

mine. New York City is a “tossed salad” as I like to say, different races, religions, ethnicities, and nationalities. The area of the Bronx I lived in consisted more of Black-Americans, West Indians and Latinx individuals. This meant you had to differentiate yourself based on your ethnicity, my father is Puerto Rican and my mother is Black- American and Indigenous Kalinago from Dominica. I took pride in my blood line and culture, I also had identity issues due to whiteness being ideal in all my ethnic identities. **“I’m not Black, I’m mixed.”** Entering college was a wakeup call, I was a Black poor girl from the ghetto. I was made fun of because how I talked, I was automatically judged due to how I looked, and I had to work a part time job the second month of entering college while other students got money sent to them whenever they needed. During my journey in college President Obama was in office, Police Brutality cases were videotaped every two weeks, the Black Lives Matter movement was growing, and the term Afro-Latino was being recognized and acknowledged. I was growing and accepting who I was with pride and strength, I began to take what I thought were embarrassing things about myself and screaming them to anyone that was near me.

Since I decided to continue my college career at Chestnut Hill and not transfer, I had to find a way to make my life at the school better. I was extremely involved in high school and knew that may be my way to find happiness now in undergrad. I found clubs and organizations to join, I found my community that I was searching for in some of the other students of color on campus. I began to think about my place at Chestnut Hill College and what legacy I would soon leave behind. I started a Black Student Union the fall semester of my junior year, it was hard, we were harassed by students and faculty who did not see the purpose of our organization. We were not always supported but we put the energy, passion and love into the organization. As the President, I was the face of Black and Brown students on our campus and I spoke for students

from urban communities. I was in newspapers, on radio shows and panel discussions due to my college undergoing a separate legal battle with a former student based on racial discrimination. Faculty and Staff selected me to be on the Institution's Diversity and Inclusion Board, I was an orientation leader, a mentor, cheerleading captain, and I had to manage classwork, put on conferences, a social life, part time job and a relationship. Though this was all very stressful and sometimes overwhelming I was thriving, and I found my place. I was pushed to my limits in college, called derogatory names because of what I stood and fought for while allowing the challenges to teach me about perseverance. I also had amazing faculty member who fought for change and let my voice grow louder and inspired me to be the leader I was. Ms. T the Trinidadian Dining Hall employee who reminded me of home and would make me jars of Hot Pepper Sauce to take back to my dorm told me one of the most memorable words before she retired, "keep going baby, remember they are always expecting you to fall, trip or mess up. If you do get up with grace and then you keep going, always remember you are doing something bigger than you think". Ending my college career was not how I started, I was on top, I knew who I was beginning to be successful young Black woman, but then graduation hit me.

I graduated in May 2017, as I walked across the stage my undergraduate classmates stood, the continuing studies students who knew what I did stood, the graduate students stood, the faculty who helped me find my voice all stood for me and the President hugged me. I was recognized on stage for the Ceremony I planned and organized that took place the day before that honored students of color and their families with a Kente Stole, I felt accomplished. Behind all the excitement of graduation, I was offered a job, and signed the lease to an apartment, moving all my things to Philadelphia permanently and got my license a few days before. Once I took off my cap and gown, I had to rush into adulthood. I was not able to settle down or take the

summer off. That summer I felt that same feeling I did my first-year of college. I was unhappy, I felt depressed again and I was unsure of my place. I knew I should not be at the job I was at and I knew I was wasting time. I was told in a month I needed to figure out if I was going to stay with the company or not, that same day I quit. It took about a month before I realized where I thrived, where I found happiness and where I succeeded. I recognized who my supporters and mentors were, they all worked in higher education. I realized I loved mentoring students and being a student leader and helping other students find their voice. I needed to leave that job, feel lost, and miss my college environment to find myself craving it again. When I announced I wanted to work in higher education I had immense support from everyone, it seemed as they knew I was going to go into the field before I did.

Countless times in life I have followed the directions of others to influence my own journey. My decision to enter into higher education was mine and mine alone, it was exactly where I saw myself. Since I was young, I wanted to be a teacher or an educator and important people in my life deterred me away from this path, but it felt like I was coming back full circle to the dream that five year old Kaileik had. My experience in college completely influenced my passion and my career choice. Though I had some amazing supporters who were employees of the university, I can count on my hand how many of those people were Black or Latinx and had come from environment like mine. This was what drove me to do this work; the representation, guidance and support I would be able to give students who are searching for someone like I was. My experience outside the classroom that the student life department was able to give me completely shaped my experience from negative to positive. There were limited resources going to a small private school, but with that I was able to develop as a student leader. The issues that constantly conflicted me was how they represented diversity on campus and being a student of

color on campus meant my existence was defying odds. The support I needed as a leader was very different from my peers, I felt like I was fighting a fight for my culture and community alone without the support of the intuition. That is where I see myself, as a missing puzzle piece for students who are longing for support and love from institutions and a society that doesn't love them the same.

Broad introduction to the concern

Attending college during 2015 was extremely powerful moment for solidifying my personal identity and the beginning stages of identifying my purpose. My mother was very involved in LGBTQA+ movements in the 80's and 90's, my grandfather was a part of the Young Lords in the 60's and 70's in New York City and my great grandmother was in the first class of Black women to graduate from Cornell Universities nursing program. I was raised on action and community building and I found opportunities in college to fight against injustices happening in society. I struggled with my own self-identity and belonging in my ethnic and racial identities my entire life, and this point I became very conscious and active in the Black community. My experience as an involved college student is completely intertwined with finding myself in the mix of student protest on campus, meetings with the president about racial discrimination on campus and racial slurs posted on my front door. I had complete support as a student leader, but I always felt the effects of tokenism in this new age of "Diversity and Inclusion". I felt more empowered and ignited as a student activism than I did as an orientation leader or athlete. I felt more exhausted trying to be the change I wanted to see on my campus, but the doubt and denial of the core work that needed to be was very stressful for me as an undergraduate student. Student activism has shaped and moved higher education, communities and society to be more progressive. Student activists commanded and added to the change during the Civil Rights

Movement and were many of the early adopters of environmentalism. College campuses have always been agents of change. Specifically, students of color have continuously been at the forefront even up to this point to these movements and racial justice on campus. Their existence alone is an act of activism if they choose to outwardly address racial and social justice on campus it is our duty as student affairs professionals to support a student fight for equity and equality. Student activism is a form of leadership and should not be just a rebellion. They are looking for change and revolution to benefit the communities they identify themselves in. Reframing the way we view student activism to be a positive aspect of education can help us alter how we develop and train student leaders across campus. Not just using Eurocentric leadership structures, but including Afrocentric organization tools to increase community, social justice and change and a holistic framework to developing student leaders. Continuing to see leadership as individualistic, hierarchical, quantitative outputs and competition only hinders student development. Eurocentric ideologies are the exact opposite of the foundations of student activism and the inclusion of Afrocentric Ideologies. We must reframe how we view student activist and include them in our leadership training and development. With the merging of the two it will be imperative to alter and adjust our current structures of student leadership and training to continue to be a vessel for progressive institutions. We must showcase our Black student leaders and listen to the needs of this community to help move forward.

My experience on my college campus was not uncommon, but it was my personal narrative. Other Black and Brown students possibly had similar experience or better or even worse. We had to exist in two different spheres, being an engaged and involved student leader and a strong willed and determined activist on campus. On one hand have been supported and praised and on the other unheard and silenced. My experience has inspired me to identify the

ways student affairs can reframe activism on college campuses as leadership. I examine how the Black student presence and involvement on college campus has continuously should be seen as form of activism but has been ignored due to the perception and negative portrayal of activist work. By examining the structures and influence of Eurocentricity, racialization and domination for the Black student activists.

Chapter 2

Thematic Concern, Conceptual Framework, and Definitions

THEMATIC CONCERN:

Student activism is catalyst for prompting change in higher education, yet students who engage in activism have not had the respect or support of their institution while they try to lead their movements. Yet student leaders on campus who directly benefit the intuitions daily procedures are given recognition praise for their leadership roles on campus. Specifically, Black students who assume student leader roles and advocate or racial and social justice on campus face a challenging battle of their identity on campus. They are fighting to be accepted and supported while they engage in student leader roles in intuitions that do not holistically provide adequate developmental support specifically for their needs as Black people. Therefore, I have set out to build a program that merges leadership development and student activism to combine in a cohesive method to better the Black student experience and foster a progressive educational and engaged environment.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK:

1. What role does a transformative education play in an equitable higher education environment and experience?
2. How has the historical role of the Black existence in Higher education influenced the progression of the institution and Black student activism?
3. How can reframing Student activism as student leadership counter the Eurocentric and oppressive ideologies of traditional leadership for students on college campuses.
4. How can an Afrocentric philosophy and Decolonial methods lead to a holistic approach to Black student leader development?

DEFINITIONS:

Constitutive:

Afrocentric A philosophical approach world history that emphasizes the rich history of communities of African diaspora (Merriweather, 2004).

Decolonization An umbrella term for various efforts to resist the intertwined processes of colonization and racialization, to ratify transformation and addresses the historical and continuing effects of these events and actions. Its purpose is to create and keep alive methods of knowing, existence, and connecting that these processes attempt to eliminate (Andreotti & Stein, 2017).

Dominance The ability to have immense control or powerful position especially in a societal hierarchy (Merriweather, 2004).

Eurocentric An ideological system of the belief that places the Europe and it's connected nationalities and ethnicities at the center of the world. There is a connection and relation thought colonism and white settlerism (Daniels, 2012).

Hierarchy A method to structure an organization by implementing various levels of authority and upward chain of command (King, 2001)

Oppression The systemic and psychological exploitation and misuse of power by one group at the expenditure of others and the use of manipulation and power to maintain this relation (Freire, 1972).

Student Activism Activism efforts by students to transform an educational institution, politics, the environment, the economic, or social change (Linder, 2019).

Operative:

*For the purpose of this paper,
the following definitions will apply...*

Activism	The method of taking action to result in social change
Black	Largely refers to a person that can connect their origins back to Africa. The term has a deeply- rooted connection to the social, political, and ordinary life of this community.
Diversity	The varieties of individual differences in humanity. This may pertain to race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, social class and religion.
Holistic	The ability to encompass and recognized the interconnectedness of the whole object or being, and not just a piece.
Inclusion	Could be viewed as the participation and empowerment, where individuals feel included, valued, respected and recognized.
Individualism	The belief system in the sole importance of the individual and the emphasis of self-reliance and mobility and independence.
Leadership	The ability and desire to assemble people to a common purpose with confidence and conviction. It should have a desired vision and the method of achieving that vision, it should help guide a collective with that idea or image, and cause inspiration despite possible hurdles.

Student Activism	Activism efforts by students to transform an educational institution, politics, the environment, the economic, or social change.
Transformative (Change)	The theoretical, applied and deliberate progression and action to influence revolutionary change.

ACPA/NASPA Professional Competencies

Professional Competency	Learning Outcomes	Application
Values, Philosophy, and History	Have the ability to describe and articulate the historical context of the inclusion and exclusion of various communities within higher education.	A key piece of the LEAD program is a historical and philosophical understanding of higher education. Not only should the implementer understand this for personal reflection, but also be able to condense and articulate this to other professional staff and undergraduate students.
Assessment, Evaluation, and Research	Develop qualitative and quantitative data collection for programmatic and departmental data assessment and evaluation using modern and efficient sources of data retrieval and collection.	Pre and Post assessment must be conducted to provide stakeholders with the appropriate information to provide funding and support of the program.
Law, Policy, and Governance	Articulate how national and state laws and government impact the rights of students, faculty, and staff for an institution.	Identifying ways to support student activist in their endeavors through modes of activism that can be conducted on campuses.
Leadership	Classify and recognize the foundational elements of organization team building. Examine and articulate how personal morals, ethics, principles, histories, and perceptions influence a personal view of an effective leader.	Understanding the foundations and elements of leadership and leadership development while combining it with decolonial methods and Afrocentric philosophies to engage students of LEAD in leader development.
Social Justice and Inclusion	Recognize how one is personally affected by and contributes to continuing and maintaining systems of oppression, privilege, and power in the structures of higher education. Advocate the issues of social justice, domination, privilege, and power that effect people based on local, national, and global levels.	Having the ability to personally understand and also educate undergraduate students on these larger denser concepts of oppressive systems in higher education is a foundation of the program.
Student Learning and Development	Articulate theories and models that describe the developmental processes of college students. Examine how the various social identities of students can influence progress during the college years. Recognize the strengths and restrictions in applying present theories and models to students of different demographics.	By understanding and applying student development theories and individual identities and experiences to the students in the program to help flourish a positive learning atmosphere for each student.

Chapter 3

The Narrative

Philosophies and Purpose of Education

There are currently over 4,500 degree-granting institutions that comprise higher education in the United States. These colleges and universities may be considered public, private, liberal arts, community colleges, or for-profit institutions. Since Harvard was founded in 1636, there have been rapid expansions of higher educational institutions that have the intentions to prepare, develop and enrich the minds of the student who have set out obtain degrees in post-secondary education. The purpose of higher education in the twenty-first century is to provide the accessibility for individuals who want to seek educational, financial and social upward movement. The ability for an individual to attend a college or university allows them to have a variety of practical benefits that provide them with better opportunities for their life afterwards. Upward economic mobility leads to a higher financial earning potential and lower probability of unemployment. Personal development and health are influenced by financial security and a stronger sense of responsibility. Community engagement and involvement are important benefits that lead to network expansion as well as a sense of accomplishment and a realization of an individual's passions. The purpose of higher education is to cultivate and nurture a student's ability to understand complex subjects, think critically and analytically in order to communicate your ideas and views effectively. Overall three main purposes of higher education in the 21st century would be an individual's personal development, the opportunity to produce an educated citizen and to be apart of a larger system of innovation and positive social transformation. Specifically, when obtaining a liberal education, the university should be a structural home of purpose, questioning, and philosophical and theoretical openness. Colleges and universities can

be viewed as vehicles for intellectual advancement and the ability to develop a flexible cognizance. Lastly, of a student's area of study it should help students obtain knowledge, logical and rational skills that they are able to apply to their lives in various ways.

In more recent years the purpose of has shifted to be allow people to have a more competitive edge and preparation for a specific job field. Higher education has drastically changed to have a more utilitarian framework to workforce readiness. The goal leans towards educating students to have the skills to secure jobs. The university has become factories of degree conferral for the most part. Brazilian educator and philosopher Paulo Freire describes the ways and connections of education and political and social structures and how the current state of education has hinder what education should be and once was. In *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, Freire address the theories of oppression and how educational liberation can counter act these systems. Freire coins what is currently seen in modern education and can be seen immensely in higher education is the concept of the "banking education." This is how we see students learning to be educated and prepared for the sole purpose of career readiness and employment qualifications. In the second chapter Freire (1972) expands on this theory of education and describes how students have become "containers" or "receptacles" that have to be filled by their educator. He continues to describe how education has been morphed into information being deposited and stead of a mutual transaction of knowledge and communication. This mode of education lacks the creation of knowledge, the ability to cultivate creativity and social transformation. As seen in academia today faculty are the most knowledgeable and holder of information while students a know nothing and are ignorant to the ways of the world. This, as Freire (1972) argued, projects the ideology of oppression and thus negates what could be seen as the true purpose of the university pertaining to "processes of inquiry". Education should be seen

as a liberatory process in all forms, ignorance to information is not negative but it hinders someone's ability to a higher consciousness. Education should allow for pedagogical approaches that allow and nurture students rather than devalue their ability to have autonomy and expand on their own thinking. Education should allow students to think critically at any stage of their educational experience, especially Higher education , it should and be a center for this to flourish.

Paulo Freire's contribution to more recent philosophers and current theories and philosophies of education is very obvious. He blended the classic philosophies stemming from Plato, Marxist thinkers and anti-colonial thought to propel the concept of education being a key method of liberation. The capacity of Freirian Pedagogy to raise awareness and consciousness for students so that they become subjects, rather than objects and simply being, of mass society. By the introduction of critical thinking students can think democratically and will have the opportunity make meaning of and for everything they then learn. Education resulting in liberation, is education is an act and practice of freedom. A scholar who continued to adopt and expand on this concept was American writer, feminist, and social activist bell hooks. hooks' using the contributions of Freire and philosopher John Dewey as the foundations of her work. Dewey is described as the founder of progressivism, which a main point is that students absorb and learn information most efficiently from their social interaction and social learning. The ability for progressivism to lead to social reform is key to the liberatory process of education and thus the act of freedom it provides. hooks asserted that progressive holistic education and engaged pedagogy is more demanding for the teacher which displays how progressive education is not just about the students. hook's philosophies derived and revolved around the interconnected social and political concepts of race, capitalism, gender, oppression, liberation and community in instruction and the process of knowledge. The ability to allow freedom in

education to flourish gives an opportunity to create an environment for change, innovation of ideas and transformation. In hooks (1994) collection of essays titled, *Teaching to Transgress*, she argues that the ability to transform learning environments into inclusive spaces that are devoted education as a practice of freedom for students. Hooks addresses the ways to transgress boundaries that hinder marginalized students from their full potential. My current understanding and purpose of education has derived from these three thinkers had been based on my own educational experience.

Having a transformational view of education intertwines elements of Progressivism, Social Reconstructionism and Existentialism. The teaching portion of education should have the potential to transform the student's cognitive abilities, emotional understandings, social concepts and their personal creativity. Having a strong holistic framework to education is an aligns with the transformative view because it notes the purpose of both the teachers needs and abilities to the students needs and abilities and how that resonates with the needs and abilities of their current society. This form of education looks at the oppressed groups of society and alters and adheres to their needs in order to create equality and optimal upward social mobility. It allows conversations about person experience to be as important as academic knowledge because it agrees to a greater understanding of and care for self, others, and the environment. As stated above higher education has shifted from this being the overall purpose of our intuitions. Poor educational instruction does not give students the ability to critically think about the information dictated to them. Nor does it give them the chance for to analyze their personal understandings and experiences in order to formulate solutions because the solutions are told to them. Freire's "banking model" or transmission model as well as a transactional approach hinders student success inside and outside the classroom. When looking at higher education it not only is

addressing the classroom experience, but also the education and development students now receive outside of it as well.

The Role of Student Affairs

Student affairs is the subdivision in higher education that orchestrates the services and support for student success at colleges and universities to improve student progress and development. There are departments within the student affairs that focus on organizational tasks and others that concentrate on student facing hands-on assistance. Student development theories are extremely important in this field because it requires the need to understand and comprehend psychology, sociology and human biology and focus more on tradition college students from 17-24 age range. It requires a wide variety of other competencies like law and policy, technology and social justice and inclusion. The size and structure of a student affairs division or department at a particular school will vary, but four-year and two-year institutions understand the importance of having these departments for the student's success. This section of higher education helps complete the student's educational career, and I do believe helps prepare them for their post-bachelors journey and completes a holistic educational experience. Student affairs has tried to take transformative education as a key component to the foundations of what they do. Student affairs does acknowledge oppressive systems that hinder student success based on race, class, sex, gender or ability status. Students may not get the same understandings of politics, social justice and inclusion as they would in a science major as they would in one of the humanities, but the ability of Student affairs is to bridge that gap. The issue arises when there is a more surface level approach for the concern of these issues in relationship to the purpose of higher education and the current standings of society.

Thematic Concern

Robin D.G. Kelley writes an article that has been a large foundation for this thematic concern. Kelley's, "Black Study, Black Struggle" poetically unmask the way the university has not been the catalyst for social transformation, but act of activism has. More concretely the efforts of Black students activist who fight for the support of their university, yet the efforts are not reciprocated. Kelley writes in the third paragraph, "instead I want to draw attention to the contradictory impulses within the movement: the tension between reform and revolution, between desiring to belong and rejecting the university as a cog in the neoliberal order. I want to think about what it means for black students to seek love from an institution incapable of loving them—of loving anyone, perhaps—and to manifest this yearning by framing their lives largely through a lens of trauma." Aside from the instructional purpose of the classroom in higher education student should have an overall positive experience. The ability to challenge students to think bigger, but also support that process. Kelley claims the institutions have no part in student activism and social transformation. I on the contrary do believe the intuitions are a hub for those thoughts and passions to flourish in a positive manner if students feel the drive to do so. Society and the classroom may bring a contextual and historical understanding, but student affairs should be able to develop the skills and help students analyze what they have grasped. Though this area of higher education propels itself by being progressive ad transformative, it works in the confinements of a system that has hindered this opportunity for over a century. The existence of Black people in higher education has always been an act of activism and leadership, but it has never been viewed as such.

***Understanding the Beginning effects of Colonization:
The parallels of History and Higher Education***

The purpose of higher education in the twenty-first century is to provide the accessibility for individuals who want to seek educational, financial and social upward movement, not

denying them based on class, gender, faith, and race. Though these are the goals and aspirations of the American higher education system, this seems to not be true due to historical events that shaped American society, which then influenced the world of academia. According to Craig Steven Wilder in his book *Ebony & Iv: Race, Slavery, and the Troubled History of America's Universities*, the American college from the start began with the dispossessing of Native Americans. Early accounts of the displacement of the Indigenous people began at the hands of men in power who created the colonies. Benjamin Franklin, a founder of the College of Philadelphia, was an advocate for the slaughtering of Native populations. He claimed “divine authority” to murder Indigenous people (Wilder,2013). Prior to the projected extinction of Native Americans Benjamin Franklin noted the population of pure White people was small, these ideologies continued to be one of the reasons for the spread of colonization and racialization (Wilder,2013). The land that American settlers did not steal from its original inhabitants obstructed the wealth of colonizers, while the rise of African slaves forcefully brought over to the Americans did the opposite.

Desire was the earliest documented ship that branched together the North American slave trade to the ports in Massachusetts, this was exactly the time when the first University opened its doors (Goodman,2015). On September 8th,1636 in Cambridge, Massachusetts, "New College" was founded. A year later the school's name changed to Harvard University, its purpose was the training of clergy. Wilder claimed the history of the American college is parallel to the history of the rise of the slave economy (Ellis & Smith, 2017). The monetary funds that came from the African slave trade are what financed the institution. Many of the benefactors who invested money into Harvard made their income from owning the slave ships and the university was able to offer free tuition for some students due to unpaid laborers or slaves. In the rapid expansion of

higher education in the U.S, slaves provided the labor that was used to maintain the buildings and school grounds. They also were slaves for faculty, administrators and students. Aside from the universities place in owning, and profiting off of slavery, it also aided the intellectual arguments that cultivated and sustained racism. Scientific racism is the belief that there was empirical evidence to support racism, racial discriminations, racial superiority, and inferiority and assimilation. Wilder, interviewed by Amy Goodman (2015), recalls the universities roll in racial biology, stating:

Actually, at Dartmouth, the medical college—it would be unfair to say that the medical college begins with this moment, but the teaching of science in Hanover begins when the physician to the president, the founder of Dartmouth, Eleazar Wheelock, drags the body of an enslaved black man, who is deceased, named Cato, to the back of his house and boils that body in an enormous pot to free up the skeleton, to wire it up for instruction. That act is not unusual. In fact, when the first medical colleges are established in North America in the 1760s—the first is at the College of Philadelphia, which is now the University of Pennsylvania, and the second is at King’s College, which is now Columbia—when those institutions are founded, actually, they’re founded in part—part of what allows them to be established is access to corpses, access to people to experiment upon. And, in fact, it’s precisely the enslaved, the unfree and the marginalized who get forcibly volunteered for that role. (para. 56)

In short, Black slaves had become as essential in the maintenance of universities and colleges as they were in the fields and plantations across states the nation, where their forced labor was central to the economy. The Civil War between the United States of America and the Confederate States of America, an assembly of eleven Southern states that left the Union in 1860 to 1861, centered on the maintenance versus the abolishment of slavery. The results of the Civil War, which lasted from 1861-1865, re-established the United States as a single nation and led to the ratification of the 13th Amendment. Though Black bodies were seen as nothing more than property up until this point and for many decades after, there were strides that free slaves took to better themselves and their descendants.

In the years prior to the abolishment of slavery, accounts of African- American graduates in universities and colleges funneled through Black people through higher education. Prior to the Civil War around Forty Black-Americans graduated from northern educational institutions. *The Journal of Blacks in Higher Education* published a chronological list of pivotal moments in U.S history that aided in the progression of African Americans in Higher education . From the first documented bachelor's degree from Middlebury College, obtained by Alexander Lucius Twilight to this point it was freed Blacks who were able to learn in these educational spaces (Winter,2007). There were institutions opened with the intentions to support the education and progression of non-white people, such as Oberlin College in Ohio, which was open to women and Black-Americans. According to Oberlin College's website (2020) their institution historical information noted it was and still is a liberal arts college and in 1835 opened its enrollment to African American male students; Black women did attend but did not receive collegiate degrees until 1862. Oberlin's pledge to the eradication of slavery made it a hospitable and safe atmosphere for 19th-century Black scholars. The university provided archival information on their website stating during the Underground Railroad, Oberlin's complex system of back roads and safe houses, allowed the college and township to offer sanctuary for fleeing slaves bound for Canada. Though Oberlin College was the first institution dedicated to the advancement of African-Americans in higher education its dominant population was still White students. In 1837, Cheyney University was established on February 25th and was the first institution created for the higher learning of Black Americans. Cheyney University founder Richard Humphreys, a Philadelphia Quaker, had desired to see that young individuals of African lineage have the opportunity to formal higher education. It was not until 1932 did the school become degree-granting for its graduates (Patterson,2010). While Cheyney University was the first university

dedicated to serving African-American many more institutions opened soon after. Education has always been a tool for Black liberation, from free slaves learning how to read and write English to the obtainment of a college degree. Black-Americans have used education as a crucial foundation for the fight against a segregated society, racism, illiteracy, and economic hardships, an act of activism in its own right. The yearning of the Black population to be academically educated people in society was the reason for the creation of HBCUs; which supported much to the progression of the Blacks in American society.

While Historically Black Colleges and Universities created opportunities for Black people to achieve collegiate degrees it was very evident that these intuitions were not given the same advancements structurally, financially and academically. The National Survey of Higher Education of Negroes studied in 1934, black colleges and using the applied criteria of the North Central Association stated the colleges for Black people in general fell below the standard in all areas of educational service. Also, in the Journal of Negro Education, as it was noted by Levy (2011), none of the institutions catering to African American populations offered work that was equivalent to what was being offered at the state institutions for whites. Many of the schools that were integrated allowed students of color in to enroll and attend most likely to validate they were not an institution that discriminated against people of color and may have been used for marketing proposes (Levy,2011). Up to this point, it was upon the school's discretion to integrate their campuses or not, many schools were not integrated but due to the 1896 Supreme Court ruling in the Plessy vs. Ferguson case, it was considered legal at the time because there was still access for Blacks to get an education (Duignan,2020). The judgment constitutionally authorized regulations barring African Americans from sharing the public facilities as whites, notoriously

known as “Jim Crow” laws, which recognized the “separate but equal” principle that would stand for the next half a century.

Activism and Higher Education: Existence, Access, and Activism

The 14th Amendment in the U.S. Constitution, approved in 1868, gave citizenship to individuals born or naturalized in the United States, which included recently freed slaves and granted all citizens “equal protection of the laws.” This was one of three amendments passed during the Reconstruction era which ended slavery and became to establish civil and legal rights for Black Americans. This would later become the clause in the Constitution that would later be used as the foundation for a variety of pivotal cases brought to the Supreme Court decisions decades later. *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka* (Duignan, 2020) is one of the most notable cases that used the 14th as the foundation to question equality in education. Black American students up to this point had been denied access to non-colored public schools based on regulations permitting public education to be segregated based on race. In the lower level courts held that racially segregated public facilities were legal if the facilities used for Blacks and for whites were equal (Duignan, 2020). This was known as the “separate but equal” principal, but the question brought to the Supreme Court was, if continuing segregation of public education based exclusively on race or ethnicity intrude upon the Equal Protection Clause that is in Fourteenth Amendment? The case concluded that separate but equal educational facilities on the premise of race is inherently unequal and it violates the Fourteenth Amendment. This ruling in education was extremely significant to desegregating public education. There was a case relating closer to Higher education , *McLaurin v. Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education*. George W. McLaurin, an African American already obtained a master’s degree, applied for admission to the University of Oklahoma to continue his education and get a doctorate in education but was

denied admission all due to his race (Rehberg,2019). Oklahoma law made it a misdemeanor to teach at or attend an educational institution that admitted both white and black students, this prohibited inclusion to the institution. McLaurin filed a complaint, claiming that the law was unconstitutional because it neglected his rights protection of the laws. The U.S. Supreme Court ruled unanimously in 1950, that racial segregation within the facilities and institutions higher education is inconsistent with the equal protection clause of the Fourteenth Amendment (Rehberg,2019). African American students must receive the same treatment as all other students in the realm of higher education. American society was shifting, discrimination grounded on race had no room in education. The court also ruled that, restrictions and limitations that officials forced on him diminished and inhibited his capacity to study and to participate in discussions with other students and faculty, this treatment had a detrimental impact on his overall educational experience. Through court rulings as society was changing and granting more rights to Black Americans, the same was in effect in Higher education . To say that these cases with a multitude of other completely changed society and education would not do service to the action efforts of Black students took about to a decade later to fight for racial equality and civil rights over a decade later. The roots of student involvement and activism in the Civil Rights era began in the 1950's, but was most recognized for the efforts in the 1960's.

According to Altbach and Peterson (1971), the Civil Rights movement was considered the most important stimulus for efforts student had to enact social justice in society and on their campuses. One of the most notorious student led protest took place on February 1, 1960 known as the Greensboro sit-in. Four African American young men at North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University staged a sit-in at a segregated lunch counter in Greensboro, North Carolina. The students, as described by Trueman (2015), refused to leave after being denied

service, the sit-in movement soon spread to college towns throughout a variety of cities and over 300 people became involved in the movement. Eight years later in Washington D.C at the Historical Black institution Howard University close to 2,000 students took over the administration building which led to the shutdown of the school from March 19 to March 23. According to Hamilton (1968), the student activist wanted the resignation of the university president, a judiciary system for student discipline, an emphasis on Black-American history and culture in core curriculum, and for the institution to drop any charges against 39 students who were involved in protest prior to the current one. These were two of the many historical moments where students turn into activism due to necessity in order to change the climate of their institutions, but also society.

Student activism specifically Black student activist are directly impacted by oppression and are more inclined to organize forms of resistance or activist work due to these direct experiences. Students movements on campus are sometimes more concentrated issues as a result of what is happening in society. Two liberatory parties that had a large community involvement and following was the Black Panther Party , a revolutionary political organization founded by Bobby Seale and Huey Newton (Duncan,2020) and the Young Lords, civil and human rights organization transformed by the leadership of Jose “Cha Cha” Jimenez (Westcott, 2018). Both of these political parties were connected to the ways in which students practiced their civil rights and supported the ways they were trying to fight for liberation for Black and Brown people. Though these organizations set to liberate, they also hindered and suppressed the voices for Black and Brown women, this created another shift in how movements were conducted in society and in the institution as well. They were women who were pushing to do the work that was challenging for themselves mentally and physically in Higher education . Toni Cade

Bambara, June Jordan and Audre Lorde were trying to take hold of the City University of New York system and transform education in a time of struggle and social change for Black and Puerto Ricans in the city (Savonick,2015). While the work they were doing was destined to be beneficial and impactful, the resources did not allow them to achieve what they hoped for.

While Black Liberation was one of the leading movements for racial equality and the feminist movement was gaining speed for gender equality, there was a missing piece for Black women. Inside of the institution and in the society Black women were at the front of a lot of these movements, but they were not supported in ways that could directly influence and energize them to fight for civil rights in the same manner. Described by the Combahee River Collective (1986), the major systems of oppression are interlocked for women of color, and in order to address the American Political system, which is a system of white male rule one needs to address the racial and sexual caste simultaneously. Years later, in 1989, Kimberlé Crenshaw coined the term "intersectionality" in a paper to help explain the oppression of Black-American women and talked about these concepts deeper in *Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics*. This changed the way feminism was viewed and how it was excluding women of color even on a global perspective. Black feminism embraces the experience of Black women, particularly understanding of their position in relation to sexism, class oppression, and racism in more recent years, this term as been used in current social movements and influenced the language used and the understanding of Black women in higher education and society. Black women were seeking to change and shift the dominant narrative that had been infringed upon the world of academia because of post colonization (Mizra, 2014). For centuries Black women were used to help larger political movements that impacted curtailed parts of their identity, but during the 1960's and

1970's they pushed the agendas of the Black liberation movement and the feminist movement by putting themselves first (Smith,2013). Years Later they were the leaders in one of the biggest racial movements of the 21st century.

In 2013, in the wake of the murder of an unarmed black teenager, Trayvon Martin was the rise of the Black Lives Matter movement, organized by three Black women. The organization that originated from the protests with the goal of highlighting the unequal number of occurrences in which a police officer killed a member of the black community, gained international recognition, after the death of Michael Brown a year later. It has advanced to embrace the issues of black women, LGBT communities, undocumented black people and black people with disabilities. The movement was the catalyst for various protest nationwide, but was the foundation for one of the biggest student protests on a college campus in the 21st century. Black students at the University of Missouri at Columbia, as described by Kelley (2016), set off a nationwide protest movement in 2015 to address the conditions facing minority students in higher education. Alongside a hunger-striking graduate student and a strike by the varsity football team. The Concerned Student 1950 movement at Mizzou demanded change on their campus and it ignited the demand for change across various higher education institutions. In a case that assessed Black Student Activist demands after the Mizzou protest, Ndemanu (2017) examines the initial causes of racial injustices on college campuses, which resulted in civil and radical protest. The article analyzes the Black students' demands in 73 colleges and universities across the United States in order to access the multilayered facets of institutional racism in higher education and the effects of it for Black students. He concluded there were common demands across intuitional types spreading across various states. Increase minority faculty, campus wide cultural sensitivity training for all faculty, increase enrollment and retention of

students of color, required racial/ social justice courses in core curriculum, university presidents to issue apology statements and test-blind or test optional policies were the most common demands from 73 institutions. Students are realizing in order to change perspectives programming and inclusive spaces do work, but not fast enough. They are tired of senior leadership not doing enough and not fast enough, they are tired of society dehumanizing the experiences of Black people.

Student activism in the university has been a key piece in societal change and social movements. From Supreme Court cases in the 1950's, the Civil rights era's boycotts and sit ins, Liberation Organizations of the 70's, to the 21st century combating police brutality and racism, in Higher education Black Students have been vessels of using experience to enforce change. Student activism has continuously been a vessel for marginalized students to not only exercise civic engagement, but also to raise consciousness of social injustices connected to their educational experience. Regardless of the positive opportunities' student activism grants, most universities still carry a negative attitude or poor training to engage with these passions and goals (Linder, 2019). Instead of proactively guiding and mentoring these students through their journey as social justice influencers on campus, they often do nothing to support students until it may be too late. There is a large opportunity for campus faculty and staff to teach students about intent vs. impact and how their roles in civic engagement can help develop their leadership skills and potentiality. Universities have failed to support students who are seen to be activist or radicals due to a larger societal issue. Historically, activism on campuses has been viewed as a challenge that needs to be managed (Kelley, 2016). Black student movements are a part of a larger systematic and societal issues pertaining to Black communities in the United States. In short, they are the products of action and social justice, which strive for liberation for a marginalized

and oppressed group. Its goal is to challenge and change the narrative of the dominant culture and Eurocentric ideologies that have influenced the ways in which we navigate our daily lives.

Higher Education and the production of power and privilege

As Higher education developed and progressed it mirrored that of the society around it. Our Nation's growth was parallel to the university and our education system. The two have a symbiotic relationship in terms of the mutual beneficial partnership. The relationship may be positive, negative, or neutral at various moments in our nation's history. One of the exchanges in the relationship is Power. Power shapes different aspects in educational institutions such as leadership structures and policies, which also influence power dynamics. These forces influence Higher education internally, but also how the university influences society externally. Society enforces influence, control and authority in education, but education produces and controls these various forms of power, which continue the cycle, which will affect society.

The purpose of Higher education has changed throughout the centuries since Harvard's opening in 1636. The goal of education should be to help students to think critically about the major ethical, societal and philosophical issues. The outcome of this will allow them to continue the critical thinking which should help progress the nations common good. Students should not be viewed as identical paper cut-outs, but as individuals who have several different backgrounds, minds and skills. Students should be educated and developed so they are able to succeed in life after college that suits their individual goals and aspirations. This is where power and control over the university arises, society enforces its needs in higher education in order to produce what is needed for the culture by the time students graduate. Post- secondary education has the power to create change, while those in control of institutions and our nation has power over the system. That is also the difference between power and dominance, which sometimes can be assumed to

be interchangeable. Power is the capability or quality of being able to get someone to do something you want, or the skill to make things transpire. It has the ability to direct or influence the behavior of others. Power is a structural part of our economy, political blueprint and society. It has its role in religion, family, and intellectual life, and it is not localized. Michel Foucault (1980), French historian and philosopher, describes power as something that circulates and only will work when it is working with other factors, which he stated in his lecture on Power and Knowledge. Foucault (1980) identifies that individuals are simply the vehicle of power, but not the direct points of creation, he also claims individuals are the effects of power. Not only does power have influential abilities but it also needs the partnering of privilege in order to have dominion over something. In order for power to be influential, there needs to be an advantage of one group over the other, so the subjects not in power to feel they need to be submissive to the domination. One can say middle to upper class, white, cis-gendered hetero-sexual Christian men are those in power in present day society. This specific group continues to maintain and continue the control they have over the governance of our nation. They produced what is right or wrong, social orders, hierarchies or other means of societal control. Those with high economic status are the most influential in our capitalistic country, this means they are able to influence other sectors of our social order. These influences can lead to various sets of beliefs that are ingrained as norms in that particular society. The Marxist philosophy of ideology is just that, a set of ideas and beliefs that are dominant in the civilization and are used to justify the power and privilege of the ruling class (Chambre & McLellan, 2020). Ideologies are technically not positive or negative Ideology, but they tend to obscure the truth or narrative. It effects the way people view how the world works in order to manipulate and control them. Negative ideology strives to sure the continuation of several oppressive systems that deprive people to live in a just society. Ideologies,

according to Althusser (2014), do not have factual backing, they are fabrications and does not have a history of its own. Ideologies can negatively enforce power as a major source of social discipline and conformity. These beliefs, as Backer (2018) argued, are entrenched sub-conscious thought, according to Althusserian philosophy, there are concrete moments of the ideological reproduction, which is called interpellation. When an individual becomes the subject of the ideology, you are then recruited by the belief, which makes you unconsciously abide to the belief with out thought. These moments happen at ISAs or Ideological State Apparatuses, which are the spaces in which an intervention is made based on the reproduction of an individual or intersectional ideology produced by the dominant class. Particular ISAs have its own way of instructing individuals to go with the social order formulated by ideologies. One of these places that are considered Ideological State Apparatuses are the Higher education Institutions in the American education system. With institutions being ISAs they continue to assert a parallel ideologies in side of the institution, due to those in power forcing these beliefs on to Higher education . This then enforces the same issues outside the university and puts them into the university. It also creates hierarchical structures, which enforce power, control and even forms of domination on numerous members of the college campus.

With the continuation of power and dominance it is important to understand the dominant narration of certain ideologies or belief that have influenced not only higher education but society. White supremacy and patriarchy have ostracized and oppressed many communities that are put on the margins of humanity. Both are engrained and significant to the Eurocentric ideologies that have been intertwined in our nation's foundation and progression. The term 'Eurocentrism' signifies a certain global view European history, it's descendants and values as the standard and thus being superior to others, this has produced and justify dominant position of

whiteness and patriarchy as the dominant (Merriweather,2004). Eurocentrism is the overarching term that encompasses the epistemology that is Eurocentric knowledge, as well the spread of capitalism and economics. The foundations of Eurocentrism and its influence on colonization adheres to a binary way of thinking which puts a white, civilized, progressive European identity and contrasts it to a Black or indigenous, traditional, original or possibly underdeveloped identity or community (Green& King,2001). Eurocentricity has played its role in the fabrics of the nation and have vastly influenced education and the Higher education systems. Higher education has moved to high tuition with low financial aid for students, with appointed leadership positions in continues to have a hierarchical approach to leadership. Individualism and competitive inputs all must give quantitative and numeric outputs for organizational growth (Daniels, 2012). This does not foster an environment that is inclusive environment for all students due to the effects of colonization specially for the success of marginalized students.

Decolonizing the University

Even though Higher education is set to serve all students in our modern-day society it has not. The system was built on stolen land and built by individuals who were expendable and viewed as property. Centenaries later the system still does not serve and righteously advance the descendants who they oppressed. With the expansion of Higher education and rise in access for Black students and the emergence of Black activism, there are efforts to diversify universities to better serve this specific racial identity. Issues arise when institutions use diversity and inclusion as a way of integration and development in a post-colonial society in these educational spaces. It could be seen that colleges and universities use diversity to mask the disparities of educational equality for students of color. Diversity is about representation and allowing non-white people to enter white spaces. In order to dismantle the actual framework of the results of colonialism and

racialization in the United States is to Decolonize the system. Decolonization is an umbrella term for various efforts to resist the intertwined processes of colonization and racialization, to ratify transformation and addresses the historical and continuing effects of these events and actions. Its purpose is to create and keep alive methods of knowing, existence, and connecting that these processes attempt to eliminate (Andreotti & Stein, 2017). Decolonization demolishes the idea that whiteness is the ideal and center of our American Higher education al System, it allows room for marginalized people of color the voice for individuality and not just as “representation.” The importance of the Decolonial Education does not just undo what centuries of oppression has done for Black and Brown students, but it creates the opportunity for the progression of equality separate of education as well. Sharon Stein, assistant professor of higher education at the University of British Columbia, expresses how the process of Decolonizing Higher education is not a quick act, but a series of lengthy actions in order to strive for a higher goal. Decolonization is not a sole event or prewritten formula, but it should be seen as multipart progression of unlearning and destructing periods of colonial ideas and infrastructures (Stein, 2017). It focuses on the student and community centered philosophies of education through a decolonial lens there is room for growth for the advance and proper development for Black students in Higher education. The decolonization of higher education is about acknowledging and confirming the experience of all individuals and how that transcends into higher education. Counter acting Eurocentric ideologies, decolonization’s utilizes Afrocentric principals to repair and transform what has already been done. Its foundations are heavily relied upon the interconnectedness and interdependency of humans, nature and spirituality. Its ultimate purpose is to overturn the colonial structure and as a result achieve liberation. Enhancing diversity is one of the strategies institutions need to take, intuitions focus on diversity, but it doesn’t truly fix the issues and

oppressive structures in higher education. Addressing the biases of non-marginalized groups through knowledge and changes in policies, while enhancing the capacity and social capital for oppressed groups that will help them succeed and compete in this system that isn't meant for them. As well as listening to the voices of students of color and what they find to be the reparations that they think would help that specific institution. Lastly taking a look at our current society and finding ways to change that will better house the ability to change the educational system. Our current nation thrives and continues because of colonization and the effects of it, so how could we transform institutions without trying to influence a larger social change (Stein & Andreotti, 2016). Personally, we need to strive for both, we shape and nurture students of color and non-students of color through the retelling of history in its true reality and through student and Afrocentric centered philosophies of education we can help our youth who see themselves as scholarly-activist and the opportunity for their voices to be heard. It creates a ripple effect for them to influence the world while in their intuitions and prepares them for their life after graduation.

The Student Response

There are close to 900,000 Black students currently enrolled in our nation's Public Universities and Colleges, whether that be a small percentage to students in rolled in Higher education in total it still requires a further look into how they are being fostered and developed on campus. While educators could be progressive and experts in their field there still seems to be a disconnect to the needs of Black students. Before the student's voice is heard, it would be effective if they are cultivated in spaces that support them and through instruction and pedagogy develop then as Black-Scholars. Faculty and student affairs professionals should see student failure as a problem with the institution and themselves and not just on the student. Diverse

student interactions are important for knowledge transfer and sustainable support. The success of Black students should be seen as campus-wide initiatives and not goals for specific offices, like multicultural offices, diversity centers or equity offices. Educators need to change the mindset of letting students of color be remedial or average based on societies standards for them. Changing this mindset will change the expectations, which will create high achieving students to continue the work they fight for outside their classes.

Black students are resisting the institutional racism ingrained in our education system to better tackle and correct what years of oppression have done. With a rise in campus racial issues and racial issues in the surrounding townships, protesting over statues honoring Confederate soldiers, presentations by white nationalist speakers, buildings of names honoring racist officials, the murder of innocent Black and Brown people; students are not standing by for things to change anymore. As argued by Kelley (2016), they are resisting as a form of healing, by grouping together and revisiting they, in turn, alter their circumstances and change their outcome. Using their trauma as a vessel to unleash change and reclaim and redeem their history is no small task. Student across the nation has demanded intuitional change and demand intuitions address their part is any historical participation in the depredation of people of color. Renaming buildings once named after slave owners, divesting from prison companies, and free tuitions for Black and Indigenous students are among some of the requests (Stein & Andreotti, 2016). More faculty and staff of color, changes in curricular, greater diversity and accessibility for marginalized people. Students have honestly called their ancestors to find the strength to demand more for themselves and the students to come so they will have a better experience. The responses of the university have varied, but for the most part, their answers have been the need for better diversity and inclusion efforts. Diversity work, as Roij (2015) suggested, is intended to enhance the intuitions

levels of diversity and social inclusion in compliance with public guidelines and norms to promote equal education and opportunities. The number of racial issues that rapidly emerged to the public eye due to the social media causes institutions to scramble to cover their image. The notion of diversity only happens if there is a presumed neutral point from which “others” are seen as “diverse”. The concept of diversity is neo-liberal language, created by the white establishment, very similar to the idea of multiculturalism. It is about administration, effectiveness, box-ticking and the image of the school. Institutions do see racism as a negative thing, but they use the term diversity to give the illusion that they are not racist, they mask their history and current institutional racism by using the term of inclusiveness and completely miss the opportunity to create transformative change. Students are joining together and unmasking the veil that institutions use to silence them.

Entry into Student Affairs

As I stated in my first chapter my interest in higher education and starting my career in Student Affairs has completely steamed from my personal experience as an undergraduate student. My educational experience was parallel to that of my journey for learning, understanding and acknowledging my own social identity as a multi-ethnic Black Women. My student leadership positions outside the classroom were all influenced by my desire to be involved on campus not only for personal gain, but for representation and my role in racial justice on campus and my surrounding community. Acknowledging this early on helped prepare my graduate career because I knew the direction and functional areas of higher education and Student Affairs I had interest in pursuing. My first graduate assistantship was a Program Coordinator position in the Office of Service-Learning and Volunteer Programs, while I was interning at the multicultural center as the Graduate Intern for the Multicultural Organization

Advisory Board. I was able to transition in that office Graduate Assistant, where I was able to program, oversee and assess a variety of initiatives from the multicultural office. The past two years I was able to work with a variety of student affairs professionals, faculty members and students on campus. All three of my experiences varied in implementing racial justice, diversity and inclusion and I was able to enhance and learn from these offices. By engaging with student leaders on campus who came from a variety of different racial and ethnic background, and various home environments in conjunction with my personal experience, I was able to see the need and motivation to reframe student activism as student leadership. I saw the need to not just speak about diversity and inclusion when educating students and training them for their positions but to restructure training and development to help them think more critically about what they do in their roles at a primarily white institution. I was able to take what I previously knew before my graduate program, what I was currently learning in the classroom and apply it with my supervisors to try and alter how our programs were running to better recruit, engage and develop our students.

Doing the Work in Different Spaces

I wanted to work directly in a diversity or multicultural office, I felt like that was where I would do all the work and programming that exactly aligned with my interest and passions. Of course, that didn't happen as I wanted, and I found myself working in a Service-learning and Volunteer office. The Office of Service-Learning and Volunteer Programs promotes community engaged educational opportunities that address critical community needs by building mutually beneficial partnerships and they seek to empower students to be active people in their local, national and global communities. Previously, I did engage in service-learning programs and volunteer opportunities during my time in college, and I did see the connection and correlation of

the two, but I was concerned how the office engaged in the work. Programs for students to pick up trash, or go read to children was important, but I was more interested to see how the office discusses systems and structures that have been put in place in society that oppress different communities and how the office strives to aid and support these communities. Luckily, the office was trying to move exactly in that direction from philanthropy to service and action. My position was to oversee an academic enrichment program that provided college students to mentor elementary and high school students in local schools and childcare programs. The program was intended for college students to serve as mentors for these children to them build positive relationships with children, provide homework assistance, enhance social skill development of youth, and facilitate educational games and extracurricular activities while developing their own professional skills. The primarily communities that were served were Black and Latinx families from a lower socioeconomic status and many were recent immigrants. I was very passionate and interested in the job and opportunity I was given with running this program. The challenge came from when I met the college students I would be advising and supervising. I had seven site leaders who six of which identified as white women and one was a Black woman. The program needed a deeper foundation of the student comprehension of social justice and racial justice, because in previous years it was very surface level diversity training. Having a leadership staff of mainly white women going out into Black and Brown communities without the proper instruction and understanding of these specific communities truly did not sit well with me. In trying to figure out how to train and develop the mentors, I did not want to focus on their actual daily task for reading and writing help for their students. I focuses on how the influence of mentors for young children can set them up for further success, I wanted to develop community building and “allyship” for my site leaders and a deeper understanding of privilege, social and

racial justice my mentors. What I realized while working with this collective of students was understanding personal identity and privilege and how that influences how they have viewed their environment and their role in liberation for Black and Brown people just through this program. The development model I used along with racial justice and social justice training was the White Racial Identity Model developed by psychologist Janet Helms in 1990. This racial identity model was created specifically for people who identify as white. Not all developmental theories are true for every individual, but it is a good framework to use as a framework alongside individual experiences. I utilized this theory to guide the training sessions I taught for the site leaders. According to Helms (1995), the model was created bring consciousness to white people about their participation in producing and preserving a racist culture, and the necessity for them to act in trying to counter this by deconstructing systematic racism through a context of white supremacy power and privilege. The six white students I trained when given an assessment survey stated their understanding of their personal identity, other racial identities, and social justice improved and they had the desire to become more engaged in racial justice work. I was able to do the work I was passionate about, with a different population of students who I never thought would grasp this work in the same capacity.

Working with Black Student Activist

During my first year of graduate school I had the opportunity to assist as an intern for the Multicultural Center's Multicultural Organization Advisory Board or MOAB. The Multicultural Center had the goal to promote the overall holistic success and development for students of color. They collaborate co-curricular experiences that encourage multicultural awareness, create a space of belonging, affirm racial and cultural identity for students of color, and empowers all students apart of the campus community to challenge systems of oppression and structures of

power. I found myself exactly where I wanted to be, around the professional staff I knew would help guide me in the functional area I wanted to be in and most important and honestly speaking I was around the student population I knew I truly wanted to work with and empower as individuals. The Multicultural Organization Advisory Board was established to provide support and guidance among the executive board members of multicultural organizations in the areas of program planning, collaboration, mentorship, resource sharing and fostering a sense of unity. Over thirty-five student organizations identified and joined MOAB and utilized the center as a resource. As I continued to work with the students as a MAOB adviser I realized the students didn't understand the impact and deep message they were providing for the college community. Any time I asked an executive board what their purpose was, they all said, "we were here, but we weren't acknowledged." Specifically, the Black or Latinx based student organizations came together because they all found themselves in a struggle of lack of community, lack of representation, and lack of acceptance of who they organically identify as. The Black student existence as activists ultimately is seen as not silencing their own voices. They realized it would have hindered them and stunted their own development if they decided to silence themselves, because I grasped the fact that they would be institutionally silenced. The efforts had to come from them first, and they had to start the progress of transforming their intuition to make room for them as individuals and their identified communities. Students of Color rarely identify themselves as activists, but rather as individuals who strive to create an environment on their campuses to thrive (Linder, 2019). As I continued to work with the students, I sought to empower them to understand the work they were doing was not only important for their college experience, but also the students themselves. I listened to their issues and problems and motivated them to find solutions, because they may not benefit but the future students after them can. I was

able to recognize their efforts and the labor that is put in with student activism. Natural leaders on campus, we found community in trying to build community. They were working in the structures of Eurocentric organizational structures, when they mission was to do the opposite of that. I gave them resources to shift they way they saw their power structures, how they communicated, the ways they voiced their issues and concerns on campus, and how they saw their action efforts to combat racial, and social injustices. I was sub sequentially studying these students and their existence on campus to further grasp how universities need to alter they accepted and acknowledged activist on campus. I also focused on the training and development of all students as student leaders on a progressive and equitable campus. MOAB and the Multicultural Center was providing the tools and resources for multicultural students and multicultural organizations that the Student Government Association and Student Leadership and Development office was not. Not because it was there but because it did not fit the needs of students of color specifically Black students to flourish as Black student leaders. I found a disconnect in the ways Black scholar activist were viewed compared to Student Leaders on campus and how training of Student Leaders across the board only implemented surface level diversity training which did not allow for anti-oppressive leadership growth. This was the start of what I knew could be a possibly opportunity for programing and additional leadership training and development.

Chapter 4

Design

Purpose

Continuously we have seen the influence of higher education in the development of individuals who have the desire to address social issues that impact society at large. From the beginning of the existence of post-secondary institutions the Black community has been present in the creation of universities and colleges. Moving towards the ability to obtain degrees from the intuitions that were built by their ancestors, to then the fight for equality for the Black community, the existence of the Black people has always been tied to the progressive influence of the university.

In more recent years there has been more activity on campuses pertaining to racial justice. It is imperative that intuitions continue to create forward-moving inclusive atmospheres for this change to flourish. Student activism has positively propelled societal transformation with the students at the forefront of the action that has taken place. There are various outcomes of students engaging in this collective action such as open-minded mentalities, political engagement, and social change.

An outcome that is not explored and examined on a large scale is the ways in which students gain leadership experience as a result of their involvement in activism. The connection of activism and leadership happens naturally when students must do the work of social change alone, but the influence and support of student affairs practitioners can greatly influence the student success of these student leaders. The engagement of activism on campus has and could

create positive outcomes for campuses such as changes to policies and procedures that influence and affect the student experience.

If the role and experience of student activism on college campuses could be reframed as student leadership this gives a better foundation for students to help the college community with the support of their institutions and feel more empowered to address social justice as a societal issue. Students should have not to deal with racial injustice issues on campus because the campus should be a place where they are able to learn and develop and then move on to confront the issues of society afterwards. In reframing student activism as student leadership, we can acknowledge the positive influences of collective action, social responsibility, decolonial methodologies and Afrocentric philosophies and influences on community. This acknowledgement and focus will intrinsically influence how we train and develop all student leaders on campus and consequently influence the entire student body to create a more diverse and inclusive environment.

Justification and Purpose

Many students are engaged in identity-based activism or activism based around their marginalized and minoritized identities but do not consider themselves activists. They engage in this work to describe their experiences and consider their advocacy as a personal responsibility and a political stance about their survival. The university was not built with the progression of people of color in mind, so student activism is seen as a way of aiding in the decolonization process of higher education (Kelley, 2016). Student Affairs educators and higher education policymakers must think critically about their efforts to create an environment that is equitable and educational. Student activists should not be left to inform themselves of policies that effect their movements, both positively and negatively; this support and education should be shared

with professionals. They can help students think critically about policies, laws and regulations that affect their personhood and life on campus. Higher education professionals should not view students who advocate for social justice as problematic, but as social change agents who have the desire to positively influence society and the campus community. Students are fighting for the equitable college experience so they can have the opportunity to have the same advantages of the college education that will help them post-graduation. Through their activism, especially if it is intentionally supported and processed with this community of students, as a result it will make them more engaged citizens post-graduation. Access was the first battle on college campuses. We may have accomplished this goal but now that students are on campus, we must create environments for students who come from non-privileged communities, that are equal, equitable and give them a chance to thrive.

Decolonial Participatory Action Research

By using critical theoretical approach to my program framework, I hope to have a more radical and liberatory experience for the selected students. The goal is to uncover social and historical forces and structures that produce domination and racial injustices. In conjunction with Critical Theory, in using action research we can implement participatory processes in our practice to create practical and monumental solutions for transformational change. By using research practices which promote human communication and interaction we can begin to demolish hierarchies and implement democratic practices. These practices include various members of the college communities such as the student body, Student Affairs professionals and academic affairs professional.

Using Decolonial Participatory Action Research (DPAR) specifically will begin to demolish forms of racial domination and white settler colonialism when addressing leadership

development and structures. DPAR is reflexive in its respect to its purpose and protecting its researchers and participants; it does not turn people into objects or subjects of examination. This aspect is key when working with the experiences of Black student leaders and their personal experiences. This approach holds the respectability of generational knowledge while diminishing hierarchies throughout the entire project. It embraces humility, vulnerability and does not allow room for expectations or roles in the dynamics of community collaboration. This form of participatory action research, decolonizes and reclaims the connotations of research and researcher and embraces critical anti-colonial settler theory and practice.

Using Afrocentric philosophies to create program training will encourage the decolonizing process in the way we orchestrate student leadership development. Employing these philosophies is crucial in accessing which decolonial methodologies would need to be implemented in strategic plans to better accommodate the Black student experience and how it can expand into student leadership as a whole. Having students participate in this program that is rooted in DPAR will nurture their leadership and teamwork skills simultaneously. By learning about the concepts of decolonization, students will be able to share their own knowledge and expertise and they will gain a critical lens for racial and social justice work. They will be able to move past just learning about rudimentary concepts of diversity of inclusion.

Foundational Theories of Program

Baxter- Magolda's Theory of Self Authorship. Students entering the program will bring experiences or learned behaviors prior to the program that can influence who they currently are and how they view the world. Baxter- Magolda describes self-authorship as an individual's ability to identify and express their own personal beliefs, identity, and social relations to the outside world (Patton et al., 2016). As the students continue to distance themselves from various

authorities in their life for who they are, the process of self-authorship begins to evolve (Patton et al., 2016). In this program students will develop the ability to first grasp concepts of who they believe they are, deepen various ways of knowing and bring truth to their experiences and cultivate relationships with others. Accessing each of the initial workshops targets and continues to process the student's awareness of their own self-authorship.

Critical Race Theory. Critical race theory (CRT) has given a radical alternate view of change and equality (Caldwell, 1996). By intertwining CRT into programming planning students will be able to have a more critical perspective and outlook on how they would navigate and comprehend concepts such as capitalism, hierarchies, cultivating communities, ethnocentrism, gender and sexual orientation. CRT creates a deeper understanding and awareness about how racism functions and expands students will hopefully produce a greater concept of social agency to expand racial justice on campus (Crenshaw, 1991). This emphasis and lens will be key for LEAD students to combine with social movement strategy development when designing their program initiatives as the program concludes.

Black Feminist Thought & Intersectionality. By understanding and discussing the daily experiences of black women's everyday struggles, students will be able to conceptualize the concept of intersectionality in reference to Black women but also understand their own intersectional identities. This program is specifically for Black and Latinx students on campus, but it is not gender specific. BFT is important not only for its contribution to critical social theories and methodologies that are also foundations elements of the program, but it is also key to understand as students discuss and study this historical context of social justice movements. The use of the intersectional study expands on the relations between organizational, figurative and daily aspects of domination and power (Alinia, 2015).

Afrocentric Philosophies of Organization. The Afrocentric organizational structure is grounded in the philosophical premise of harmony, spirituality, and people-oriented principles (Merriweather, 2004). The administration elements focus on the support and inclusion of all members of the team, communal supervision style, and people's emotions and care before quantitative results (Merriweather, 2004). I want to create a more freeing and slightly therapeutic environment because the topics that will be discussed are sometimes triggering or emotional draining. By utilizing this approach to the program, the cohort will more comfortable with engaging in critical dialogue because they will feel comfortable, open and even cared for as they develop their leadership and activist abilities.

Decolonial Methodology. Though the decolonization process is not just one step but a series of steps, I see this program as an educational guide for what this may look like for various offices who train students for leadership roles on campus. It does not address all the ways institutions can unpack the effect of colonization, but it begins to shift away from basic diversity and inclusion work and emphasis and rather lean on actual intuitional change. I want students in the program to address and acknowledge their own educational needs and experiences so then can decide how they define their opinions ad perspectives for what they see valuable in leadership and activism for the campus.

Program Proposal

LEAD ***Leadership Education Activism Distinction***

Mission. LEAD seeks to promote leadership and activism among Black college students. The program is designed to support, empower, and equip college students as social change agents for their lives, communities and world. By increasing the participation of Black scholars in social, and political action, LEAD seeks to question and redefine the perception of leadership. The goal is to promote perspectives and practices that are cooperative, accountable, ethical, action oriented and equitable. To see the LEAD logo please see Appendix A.

Vision and Philosophies.

LEADERSHIP

- Acknowledges self and the individual
- Challenges the status quo of being an effective leader
- Is responsible, supportive, moral, and effective
- Balances individual duty with collective needs
- Develops concepts and definitions of leadership to include non-traditional models and Afrocentric principals
- Seeks to make choices and decisions that are as clear and non-hierarchical
- Explores the barriers to leadership are based in structural injustices and inequalities

SOCIAL JUSTICE & RACIAL JUSTICE:

- Allows for self-identification and self-determination
- Models anti-oppressive practices, behaviors and leadership styles

- Understands that the theories and practices of racial justice may vary and encourages every student to define their own relationship to social justice
- Is rooted in a belief in the power, and potential of the Black community
- Is committed to challenging the internalized, social, institutional, and ideological oppression

TEACHING & LEARNING

- Understands that we are all learners and challenges us to move forward in all ways of knowing
- Values students as experts about their own lives
- Demonstrates that learning should be challenging, engaging, applicable and enjoyable
- Encourages debate and diversification of perspective and opinion
- Exposes students to new experiences, opportunities, and resources

COMMUNITY:

- Creates a brave space where everyone feels respected for who they are and what they provide
- Involves an obligation to resolving conflict respectfully, responsibly, and creatively
- Deconstructs and questions oppressive actions and language
- Embraces emotions as information and knowledge

Program Goal. The goal of my intervention is to connect activism and leadership to empower students to make social/institutional change. To implement this intervention, collaboration between the department tasked with diversity initiatives or programming and the department tasked to address student leadership and involvement would be necessary. It is

imperative that Black emerging student leaders be engaged in this intervention to help them develop as leader activists. The intervention will consist of an annual program that engages already involved Black and Latinx students to critically analyze systems of oppression with a intersectional approach to race and how it correlates to higher education and their experience. I want to include students who may have various levels of experience and understanding of this work to now begin to think critically about the university. Addressing Identity, community building, systems of oppression and action research in a current and historical context.

Objectives. The LEAD Program is a cohort-based program that recruits a maximum of thirty students in its first year to participate in a year-long training program. Within the course of the academic year students will participate a series of twelve workshops that will unify their identities as student leaders and student activists with the goal to create institutional change. This program is designed primarily for Black and Latinx students to engage in racial justice and leadership training through the lens of Afrocentric philosophies of community and collective development. The assistant director of a multicultural center or diversity center will primarily be the coordinator for this program. They will be assisted by a graduate assistant. In the first year, as a pilot program, the students will develop an action plan or initiative to bring light to racial justice on their college campus. Students will be exposed to larger concepts of decolonial methods to expand their scope beyond diversity and inclusion to social justice.

Learning Outcomes. As a result of their participation in the program, students will be able to:

- Analyze the connections, layers and privileges of identity dimensions and contextual influences in respect to an intersectional approach to collective action and leadership development

- Demonstrate adequate understanding of the complexity of elements important to race, ethnicity and culture in relation to its history, values and activism
- Articulate strategies to impact campus climate through activism, advocacy and “allyship”
- Reflect on how their own attitudes and beliefs are different from those of other cultures and communities.

Recruitment Process

Marketing Strategies. The focus of recruiting for the program would be to have engaged and passionate students. Being intentional about how to grab student’s attention to have interest in social justice and racial justice efforts on campus through student activism is key. Including the program on all departmental office marketing would helpful in informing students what programs the department offers. As for direct marketing and promotion for the program, posters and flyers around campus as well as any digital signage and the school newspaper or newsletters the school provides for departmental use. An example of a flyer could be seen Appendix B. Social media post on Instagram could be useful for sharing and outreach for participation. Email blast to academic departments and faculty could utilized for a large nomination pool.

Application Process. The program is about collective action and less about quantitative results, but for budgetary reasons a limit for the number of participants is necessary. There would be a hope that more students will be interested in the program due to a successful recruitment process, but due to budget logistics the selection process on the first year will hold a maximum of thirty students. Faculty, staff and community leaders or mentor for an individual student may have the opportunity to nominate a student of the institution to participate in the LEAD program by filling out a nomination application. An example of the nomination application can be viewed on Appendix C, if a student is nominated, they would receive an email

stating their nomination and be guided and informed of further steps. If a student is nominated or applying to the program on their on behalf they will need to fill out a student application to be given the opportunity to have an interview, please see Appendix D for an application sample.

Selection/Interview Process. The selection process is not rigorous or selective for students to apply to the program. The nomination and application process is meant to understand a student's prior engagement and interest in this work, and also to understand what they can possible learn or gain from this experience. No student will be turned away if they have minimal engagement on campus or in the community, but it may be possible to guide them to possible opportunities. A GPA requirement ensures that the student has the ability to take on another role will not hinder their academic obligations. It is important that the student be acclimated to the campus community, the program requires at least the completion of 30 credits by the beginning of the academic year. Examples of interview questions can be viewed in Appendix E.

Requirements

- A track record of student involvement on campus (i.e., student organizations, undergraduate research, campus organizing, student employment.). Student involvement is not limited to registered student organizations.
- A track record of community involvement (i.e., volunteer work, non-profit involvement, social justice internship, community engagement work)
- Articulated desire to be a change agent within the community.
- 2.5 cumulative GPA
- 30 credits upon completion of this academic year

Program Timeline

Month	Task Description
April-July	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Departmental Staff Hires LEAD Graduate Assistant for Upcoming Academic Year
August	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begin preparing promotional and recruitment documents
September	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotion and recruitment for program • Begin accepting applications and nominations • Begin interview process as applications come in
Early October	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cohort selection
Mid October	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commencement of LEAD program
Ending April	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conclude LEAD Program: Completion Celebration

Program Outline.

Workshop Number	Program Topic	Brief Description
1	Introduction/Welcome Social	This will be an introduction to the program and all the participants. Ice breakers, and energizers will be used to bring familiarity and community to group.
2-3	Understanding My Identity	Identifying the students personal and social identities as well as discussing intersectionality. Group reading. Creating the cohort mission
4	What Does it Mean to L.E.A.D? Community Centered Action, Racial Justice	The purpose of the program, short video clips, reading passages of larger terminology to further discuss throughout the program.

4-5	Educating with Decolonial Intent	How does the work or student organization lead to decolonial practices on campus? Education and Activism are parallel to leading to liberation
6	Leading Leadership Development and Training for Student Activist	Understanding Afrocentric Philosophies to be a leader Dismantling hierarchies and power
7-8	The Age of Student Activism	Historical analysis of Student Activism Timeline Mini documentaries and reflection .
9	Action and Activism with Intention of transformational Change	Beginning the Cohort's Initiative
10	Action Planning Day 1	Continue
11	Action Planning Day 2	Continue
12	Cohort Conclusion Ceremony	Celebration of completion Presentation Concluding and editing the cohort mission

Any off-campus cohort engagement is not a part of the workshop series; these will be weekend activities with students and coordinators.

In-Depth Workout Outline.

Workshop	Activity	Time Allotted (minutes)
4 The Age of Student Activism *Prereading given ahead of time	Welcome- Check Ins	5
	Engaging Ice Breaker	10
	Mini Documentaries	30
	Civil Rights Black Lives Matter 2015–16 University of Missouri protests	

	Breakout Sessions for reflection	15
	Group Reflection and experience sharing	10
	Journaling session	15
	Connection of workshop to pre-reading	20
7 Action and Activism and Intentions for Transformational Change *Strengths Test	Welcome Check Ins	5
	Energizing Ice Breaker	10
	Strength Test Results – with an analysis of Race and Power Identifying our strengths are a collective	45 minutes
	Understanding Hierarchies	30
	Leadership is a Scheme. Defining leadership as a collective	20
	Closing- Journal reflection	10

Completion/ Certification. The end goal for students to meet and complete the desired learning outcomes to be obtained and to have created an initiative for the remainder of the second semester. The LEAD students join as collective to form a call to action- based initiative influenced by experiences on their college campus or in the surrounding communities of the intuition. The cohort can identify how this may look, but examples could be a hashtag with a series of informative posters on campus bringing attention to food insecurity on campus. The issues that rise on campus may vary depending on the state of the campus climate or current events in society. Upon completion the cohort will receive a certificate of completion and cords or a medallion for graduation. After the first year three to five LEAD activists will be invited back as mentors for the following year to help in implementing the initiative and in training and supporting the next cohort of LEAD.

Implementation

Workshop Content. The content of the program may vary each academic year depending on the climate of society and the university, as I stated above which is the reason for each program initiative being different. Though the content may vary, the individual workshop

themes should be constant. As these are undergraduate students their capacity to understand philosophies and concepts may vary. The sequence of the workshop should follow the table above because it allows students to focus on their own social identities and then dive into the deep concepts of decolonial methods and Afrocentric philosophies to community and organizing. After they have learned and processed these first two phases, they are able to then learn more historical context and then apply it to their own practices and begin the action planning phase of the program. Prereading may consist of excerpt of literature written by Kimberle Crenshaw, bell hooks, The Combahee river collective, Ta-Nehisi Coates, Elizabeth Acevedo. Beginning intentional about providing reading options for the cohort written by Black and Latinx writing will bring a variety of discussion topics and lenses to the larger themes of the program. Watching documentaries about various student activist movements in the twentieth and twenty-first century, will provide a historical context that the students may not have been exposed to prior. Finding a blend of scholarly journals and entertaining web articles for concepts like decolonization, intersectionality and Eurocentricity will be key to helping student grasp larger concepts, but still allow room for questions and deeper analysis of concepts during the workshops.

Budget. Funding for LEAD would come from an increased office budget given that the retention and completion population of unrepresented minority students is a concern for many colleges and universities, there is an opportunity to advocate for more resources to create a program like LEAD. This is an internal source of funding as it is coming from the university itself, but staff members will be advised to apply for grant funding for the program as well. Alumni who attended the institution and have a connection to the center or student population would be a targeted donor source for extra funding for the program. Racial affinity groups that

are registered with alumni relations would be a useful resource or funding or volunteer roles in the program.

EXPENDITURES

Personnel

Benefits	
Graduate Assistant	20,000
Total Personnel	20,000

Operating

Advertising	50
Conferences/Training	2,000
Community Building	2,000
General Travel	1,000
Copiers/Paper	50
Office Supplies	300
Catering/ Food	3,000
Furniture/ Fixtures	500
Wearing Apparel	1,000
Total Operating	9,900

TOTAL EXPENDITURES

Net Revenue/(Expenses)	29,000
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In the first year of the program the supervision will be provided by mid-level director of Multicultural/Diversity Center, who will supervise a full-time graduate student. A program committee will include representatives of women's centers, LGBTQA centers, service learning, student leadership and involvement, diversity and equity offices. These offices will support in planning and facilitation of workshops throughout the course of two semesters. The director is employed by the multicultural or diversity office and their salary is from from the department budget not directly for what is allocated for the program. As for the graduate student their tuition remission stipend is comes from the office budget, but they are used primarily for this program and other departmental initiatives as a secondary job duty. Posters, flyers and signage will be

used to paper promotion during the application process. Professional development funding will be provided for the assistant director and graduate student to attend local or regional conferences for greater experience in field to enhance critical thinking and education for students. The NCORE conference would be a great professional development opportunity as it discusses issues of race and ethnicity in American higher education. The focus is on creating and sustaining inclusive institutional change that focuses on the intentions to progress racial and ethnic climate on campus. Van transportation or bus transportation during semester for out-of- state social justice exploration service trips to surrounding cities or states. The opportunity for the cohort to engage in service trips or bonding opportunities allows them to engage in an educational group setting together and help build moral, comfortability and community. Supplies for the cohort throughout training and semester to journal, take notes, create art and poster creations allows for other forms of reflection and creativity. Funding needs to be allocated for breakfast, lunch, dinner or snacks for 30 students depending on the time of the program, this might be provided by university catering or off campus vendors. A small library consisting of 1 or 2 bookshelves in center housing books, textbooks, or movies around activism, racial justice and social justice for students to barrow can be utilized and sponsored by the program budget. Lastly t-shirts and small duffle bags, water bottled are offered as “swag” for participation, not as incentives for joining the program.

Implementation Challenges. Some possible implementation challenges that may come up prior to the program starting would be a lack is funding for the program. A program budget my vary based on an intuition, but this challenge could be navigated by eliminating and decreasing the allocated amounts such as apparel, professional development, or the ability to have off-campus cohort building. This program could be scene as radical or disruptive, this is not

surface level diversity and inclusive training. Conversations about engaging in student activism specifically in reference to race, racism and decolonization is not commonly discussed with undergraduate students. This has the opportunity to create institutional change if given the approval to begin the program, but change is key, and this program acknowledges systems that oppression marginalized groups of people directly in higher education. Lastly, recruitment of students may not meet the goal of thirty of students, but the main goal would be to have an engaged group of student activist large or small.

Chapter 5

Assessment and Evaluation

Introduction

Power and privilege are continuously reproduced in higher education. Power funnels from the board of trustees to the students and all the different departments and sectors in between. Students should not only be actively engaged on the campus community, but it is important to develop and educate student leaders on campus and model this engagement in our departments and the institution at large. While still considering the purpose of higher education, the growing field of student affairs and the increasing numbers of Black and Brown students attending college, it is crucial for student affairs professionals to be active change agents as well. Creating change should not fall solely on the efforts of students to push for transformative education and experience but should also be the responsibility of those who hold leadership roles and positions of power. A transformative education that is influenced by the changes in society should be a part of the duties and obligations for faculty and staff to be educated and empowered enough to do so.

In an educational community with a variety of students, faculty and student affairs professionals, it would be prudent to acknowledge student activism as leadership because the results will be beneficial for the entire educational community (Linder, 2019). Activism and racial justice on campus is intended to create improvements for the not only the specific community it benefits, but for a progressive institution as well. Specifically, when talking about activism, racial justice and leadership development, our institutions must mirror what we wish to impart to our students, no matter how they identify themselves. A transformative educational

experience in higher education is important to the progression and improvements of society as a whole and that begins with transformative leaders in education.

Transformative Leadership and Higher Education

Previously, leadership in higher education has been seen as extremely hierarchical and “top down.” Being a powerful leader has a strong connection to Eurocentric ideologies of leadership. The combination of patriarchy, individualism, control and domination is rooted in how leadership has been represented for centuries. Traditional forms of leadership have not offered positive and holistic foundations to the term and has influence the power structures in higher education (Green & King, 2001). Yet, as society changes and the university progresses, so do the structures, systems and representatives of these institutions. In a transformative approach to leadership in higher education, change is the fundamental purpose and motive. In transformational leadership the ability to lead does not come from one sole individual. It surpasses the individual and does not flourish in hierarchy, but rather in shared leadership spaces. Leaders in higher education that have this ability empower and inspire those around them to enhance their own abilities to accomplish goals and create change. Higher education is transformational and progressive and has the ability to cultivate this form of leadership style naturally if the assumptions of traditional Eurocentric leadership is eliminated. Allowing Afrocentric philosophies of leadership and organizational structure is deep-seated in transformative leadership. As I stated in the previous chapters, Afrocentric philosophies are very community oriented. Like transformative leadership Afrocentric philosophy focuses on the collaboration of individuals whose emotions, beliefs and perspectives are all held to the same importance (Daniels, 2012). There are moments when power and authority is central in the leadership structure, but it is based on strengths and council-based delegation. The recognition of

Afrocentric philosophies in transformative leadership is significant when working in spaces that foster diversity and inclusion, but also want to create and foster decolonial methods to transforming higher education. When individuals in an environment like a higher education institution revolves around a set core of values, purpose and mission for a transformative educational experience and aims at implementing what it necessary for all student development and success, it allows for students to feel empowered and supported (Allen & Cherrey, 2003).

By bridging activism and leadership, educators may find themselves more equipped to support and empower students of color, but also to support white students. The idea that student affairs professionals should mirror what they envision for students is key to student leadership development. By trying to counter hierarchy, individualism, power and oppressive structures there is a decolonial perspective to leadership. By trying to counter these dominate power structures, specifically in spaces that offer services for Black students, the outcome can lead to an organic and holistic approach to leadership development for these students (Green & King, 2001). Specifically, for Black student activists, it is important to recognize that transformative leadership development can occur when there is participation in activism and social action (Ekins & Elkins, 2019). Educators advocating for more radical tactics and strategies can instill the value of activism and social action in their student populations as well. Transformative leaders in education and Black student activists both have the common desire to make society a better place. The collective development and action are more important than the individuals, but both play a role in social change. Student affairs professionals play a crucial role as ally and mentors for student activist, by offering support and guidance. Student affairs has an opportunity to help students reflect on their experiences, identities and connections to their communities.

They have an opportunity to develop these students as leaders and empower them to make impactful changes on college campuses.

LEADership

Leadership and leadership development with student activists are the foundations of my program intervention. I propose a different lens to leadership rather than the traditional term, but a decolonized approach to the development and training for the Black student activist. Student activism helps develop a plethora of leadership skills in advocacy, community building, negotiation and education (Martin et al., 2019). When working with Black students there should be an adaption of leadership development that caters to this specific community that centers activism, a concept that most traditional leadership development has missed. Black student activists utilize their experiences to lead their efforts in racial justice. Students refer to resistance and activist work related to their minoritized identities as an obligation because the institution has not made stronger efforts to enforce change. Moreover, educators commonly assume Black students address and deal with oppression as part of their experience, rather than seeing it a form of activism, engagement, or leadership (Linder, 2019). This intervention offers an alternative perspective to the Black student's experience; it offers the recognition of their experiences and empowers them to act and create change. By providing support and guidance students will be able to acknowledge their experience and create an outlet to change that experience for themselves and the next student. The values and philosophies of this intervention lead to the development of a dynamic cohort of students who are empowered and encouraged to lead and transform. I would utilize a transformational approach to leadership, as the purpose of the program is to seek to change in the institution and I would like the students to learn and replicate these skills, by inspiring leaders with in themselves. I would encourage, empower and inspire

students to want to create intuitional change and put the effort into doing the work that they see fit for the university. Having a shared vision and goal that the cohort creates is key along with making the connection needed to build trust and conviction in my supporting role. In combination with having a transformative leadership style I would also have a democratic style as well. Working together, being a unite in decision-making and engaged participation is important for LEAD to flourish as how I envision. A collaborative approach to achieving goals is key for DPAR and other foundations that the program is rooted in.

Assessment and Evaluation

On the academic side of higher education evaluation and assessment has been key for growing academic departments, faculty tenure and student learning. Student affairs has implemented assessment as a part of ensuring student success. A methodical practice of documenting and utilizing data to obtain qualitative and quantitative measurable results of information about student performance or progress (Lynch, 2016). Assessment in student affairs can help identify that learning outcomes, program goals and objects have been accomplished. Or it can assess the opportunity to continue, change or eliminate department initiatives and programs.

The outcome of my intervention most likely will not have a large amount of quantitative data to be assessed as a reflection of the program. A qualitative assessment plan would be more resourceful in assessing the impact of the program and tells a story or the journey of the student activist in LEAD. The ability reflect on more descriptive results would adhere to the decolonial method of DPAR. Pre and post assessment interviews can gauge a variety of the intended goals of the program. Utilizing a Likert scale for post assessment can give me the numerical data without having to read and decode the qualitative data results. Surveys conducted to measure the

program's structure and facilitation of workshops can be useful to improvements and enhancements of the program. Trying to quantify the student experience numerically as they participate in the LEAD program is slightly problematic based on the values, theories, and foundations of the program. If the goal of the program is to have thirty students participate in the first year, but only fifteen students accept and join, numerically that seems like a failed recruitment outcome. If pre and post surveys and interviews are conducted, and those fifteen out of thirty students successfully engaged and gained what was intended for them that seems like more of a success than a failure. A potential future assessment opportunity would be to see if students who participated in the LEAD program, continued to find other leadership roles on campus and utilized the skills learned in the program. Seeing what leaderships roles students were involved in prior to the program and then after as they conclude their educational journey at the institution. This is could lead to increases in engagement, involvement and retention for students of color at the institution. Below is an example of the assessment questions and surveys used for data retrieval for the program.

LEAD Pre-Program Survey Questions in Interview

1. Why do you want to participate in the Leadership Education Activism Distinction Program?
2. What are you looking to gain from participating in the Leadership Education Activism Distinction Program?
3. How will your participation in this program benefit your leadership development and activist engagement?

LEAD Post-Program Survey Questions in Interview

1. Describe a moment you felt empowered on campus as a result of the Leadership Education Activism Distinction Program?
2. In your own words describe
 - a. Power
 - b. Privilege
 - c. Oppression

- d. Decolonization
- e. Leadership
- 3. How have you thought about continuing your efforts of racial justice on campus now since participating in LEAD?
- 4. Which workshop was most impactful for your journey in the LEAD program?

Example of Program Satisfaction Survey

Question	Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied	Very Satisfied
Overall Workshop topics					
Overall Workshop Content					
LEAD has helped me to improve upon my personal definition of leadership					
LEAD has helped my engagement and understanding of student activism					
I felt comfortable with my peers in the cohort					

Looking Ahead

This program is intentionally created for Black students as the primary targeted student population, the secondary population is Latinx students. In the future, I would look into ways the program could integrate with a student leadership office or a university's student government association to really implement decolonial methods at the source of all student involvement on campus. Working within a multicultural center does not always have the same reach to large diverse student populations that are not already involved with the center. The LEAD program is different than other student leader building programs, due to it having radical elements and frameworks that are not largely discussed in student affairs may lead to resistance regarding the implementation of the program or funding. As stated in Chapter four, the justification and

rationale for this program is imperative, but it is also important for leaders of the institution to then hear the concerns and initiatives of the students who participate.

This program centers transformational change and racial justice on campus in an effort to lead to a more progressive institution and a more equitable education for students. The support of all those in the community is necessary but may not be met. My hope would be to implement this program at a future institution where I may be employed. I may need to alter and tailor the program to fit that institution, but student activism can be found on any campus, and Black students need opportunities to voice their experiences and a chance to develop in ways that cater to their needs. I would love to take the concept of reframing student activism as student leadership and facilitate a conference presentation or workshops for student affairs professionals. Black student activists need more supporters, mentors and guidance and I plan on serving in that role for them as I begin my career in higher education.

Conclusion

My experience going to college from 2013-2017 was so significant for my future endeavors and my entry into higher education as a profession. I never realized at the time my existence on campus, my efforts for creating institutional change and the representation as a student leader would have impacted my college experience in the way it did and leave a legacy for the future students enrolled at my alma mater. My acceptance into college was only followed by the individuals and my ancestors who built and paved the path for spaces that were not for us originally. Activism in higher education has always been a pillar to progress for marginalized people in the institutions, and also in society. The Black community has always led the way to think through crisis and fight against oppressive systems that hinder their progress in the world. Black students will carry this deeply rooted mentality to institutions that do not provide them

with the same equitable educational experience that their peers receive. It is our obligation as educators and leaders in higher education to support the student voices that are being silenced. LEAD provides the opportunity for Black student activists to be heard, empowered and supported in their efforts to create institutional change. We must support the Black student leader as much as we support the Black student activist, because they are one in the same.

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APPENDIX

Appendix A

LEAD logo



Appendix B

LEAD Interest Flyer

**Now Accepting
Applications!**

LEAD

LEADERSHIP EDUCATION ACTIVISM Distinction

**PROMOTE
LEADERSHIP AND ACTIVISM**

RACIAL JUSTICE

LEADERSHIP

COMMUNITY

STUDENT ACTIVISM

**APPLICATIONS ON THE ASBURY MULTICULTURAL CENTER
PORTAL PAGE**

Appendix C
Nomination Application

Name: *

Your position/title held on campus or in community: *

Full name of nominee: *

Anticipated Graduation Month and Year of nominee: *

Nominee email: *

Give a brief description of your relation to the nominee: *

Please provide a description of your reason for nomination. Please indicate any involvement or previous leadership experience this student has displayed and how this program can enhance their knowledge and advocacy work. *

Appendix D
Student Application

First Name: *

Preferred Name:

Last Name: *

Gender Pronouns: *

(ex. They/Them/Theirs, She/Her/Hers)

Race/Ethnicity: *

Student ID # *

E-Mail: *

Permanent Address: *

Anticipated Graduation Month and Year: *

Major: *

Please list your current involvement on campus or in your community (if applicable): *

Why do you want to participate in the Leadership Education Activism Distinction Program?

What are you looking to gain from participating in the Leadership Education Activism Distinction Program?

How will your participation in this program benefit your leadership development and activist engagement?

Appendix E

Interview questions

1. Tell us about yourself.
2. Why are you interested in Leadership. Education. Activism. Distinction Program?
3. What qualities about yourself make you a great participant for this program?
4. What are current social issues or topics that you think are important for student leaders today?
5. How do you define leadership? How do you define activist? Can you make a connection of the two?
6. What are your commitments for this school year?
7. One important aspect about being a leader is also being aware of oneself and what one can contribute, including time commitment. Can you provide me with how you manage your time to assure that you are giving 100 percent to everything you do?

Impromptu Questions/Answers:

Appendix F: Assessment and Evaluation Documents

LEAD Pre-Program Survey Questions in Interview

1. Why do you want to participate in the Leadership Education Activism Distinction Program?
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3. How will your participation in this program benefit your leadership development and activist engagement?

LEAD Post-Program Survey Questions in Interview

1. Describe a moment you felt empowered on campus as a result of the Leadership Education Activism Distinction Program?
2. In your own words describe
 - a. Power
 - b. Privilege
 - c. Oppression
 - d. Decolonization
 - e. Leadership
3. How have you thought about continuing your efforts of racial justice on campus now since participating in LEAD?
4. Which workshop was most impactful for your journey in the LEAD program?

Example of Program Satisfaction Survey

Question	Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied	Very Satisfied
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Overall Workshop Content					
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I felt comfortable with my peers in the cohort					